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UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Recommendation by the Executive Director
Assistance to the Government of Tunisia
Support for a comprehensive population programme

Proposed UNFPA assistance:	$10 million, of which $5 million is to be committed from UNFPA regular resources. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $5 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not possible, UNFPA would seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.
Estimated value of the Government's contribution:	To be determined
Duration:	Five years
Estimated starting date:	January 1992
Executing agencies:	Government of Tunisia United Nations United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) National and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
Government co-ordinating agency:	Ministry of Planning and Regional Development

READEX
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TUNISIA

Demographic facts

Population Total (000)	
Total	8,169
Males	4,132
Females	4,036
Sex ratio (/100 females)	102.4
Urban	4,439
Rural	3,730
Per cent urban	54.3
Population in year 2000 (000)	9,821
Functional age groups (%)	
Young child: 0-4	13.4
Child: 5-14	24.4
Youth: 15-24	20.5
Elderly: 60+	6.4
65+	4.0
Women: 15-49	24.6
Median age (years)	20.8
Dependency ratios: total	71.8
(/100) Aged 0-14	64.9
Aged 65+	6.9
Agricultural population density (/hectare of arable land)	0.61
Population density (/sq. km.)	50
Average annual change (000)	
Population increase	170
Births	226
Deaths	56
Net migration	0
Annual population total (% growth)	1.98
Urban	2.66
Rural	1.14
Crude birth rate (/1000)	26.3
Crude death rate (/1000)	6.5
Net migration rate (/1000)	0.0
Total fertility rate (/woman)	3.38
Gross reproduction rate (/woman)	1.65
Net reproduction rate (/woman)	1.51
Infant mortality rate (/1000)	47
Life expectancy at birth (years)	
Males	66.6
Females	68.4
Both sexes	67.4
GNP per capita (U.S. dollars, 1988)	1,230

Sources: Population density on arable land is derived from two publications issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: FAO Production Yearbook 1985 and World-wide Estimates and Projections of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Population Segments 1950-2025, ESS/MIS/86/2; gross national production per capita: World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Figures for population, total population by sex, population by age group, age indicators, urban-rural population, and population density (/sq. km.) refer to the year 1990; figures for average annual change, rate of annual change, and fertility and mortality are the five-year averages for 1990-1995. These data are from the Population Division, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, World population prospects: 1988.

I. SUMMARY

1. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) proposes to support a comprehensive programme in the amount of $10 million, of which $5 million would be committed from UNFPA's regular resources, over a five-year period, starting January 1992, to assist the Government of Tunisia in achieving its population and development objectives. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $5 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not possible, UNFPA would seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

2. The proposed programme of assistance, UNFPA's fifth, is based on the findings and recommendations of the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) mission that visited Tunisia in April 1990. The mission worked in close collaboration with government officials as well as with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in Tunisia. The proposed programme would be closely linked to Tunisia's eighth development plan, for 1992-1996, and is designed along the lines of the Government's population strategy and on the basis of lessons learned from population activities implemented under previous programmes.

3. The overall objectives of the programme would be: (a) to assist in the preparation and formulation of a cohesive population policy; (b) to support research on population dynamics and on the interrelationship of demographic, social and economic variables; (c) to promote integration of population variables into development planning; (d) to decrease the maternal mortality rate; (e) to reduce the national fertility rate and reduce discrepancies between regions; and (f) to improve the general well-being of women by upgrading the quality of family planning services, by creating awareness on women's role in society and by enhancing their involvement in the economy of the country.

4. All projects under the proposed programme, as in all UNFPA-assisted programmes, would be undertaken in accordance with the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action; that is, that population policies should be consistent with internationally and nationally recognized human rights of individual freedom, justice and the survival of national, regional and minority groups (para. 14 (d)); that respect for human life is basic to all human societies (para. 14 (e)); and that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so (para. 14 (f)).

II. BACKGROUND

5. Declining fertility rates since 1966 have changed the structure of the Tunisian population. The proportion of the population aged 15 and under has decreased, which in turn has led to a decrease in the dependency ratio (currently at 65.8) and an increase in the size of the economically active population (age 15-60). This has been accompanied by a marked increase in life expectancy, from 57 years in 1975-1980 to 67.4 years in 1988, and a significant decrease in infant mortality from 156 per 1,000 in 1966 to 50 per 1,000 in 1988. Support for maternal health has been insufficient, however, owing to a lack of accurate data on maternal mortality and to the fact that maternal health services are provided as auxiliary services at maternal and child health (MCH) centres.

6. Fertility rates vary from region to region and between urban and rural areas within regions. This is also true of contraceptive use, which ranges from 64 per cent in Tunis to 31.5 per cent in the western-

central region, where 15 per cent of the population lives. Rural-to-urban migration is on the rise, particularly among youth, who migrate to urban areas in search of work.

7. According to the 1988 national demographic and health survey, there is a large gap between knowledge and use of family planning methods -- 98 per cent versus 50 per cent of women of reproductive age. This is due in part to the scattered nature of rural settlements and the consequent inaccessibility or unavailability of health care and family planning services, the high illiteracy rate and isolation of women living in rural areas, and the high cost of broadcast information campaigns. It also reflects the fact that one third of the country's basic health centres currently do not offer family planning services.

8. Although enrolment in primary school is reported to be high, the educational system in Tunisia has experienced some shortcomings, including the quality of the curricula. Boys generally fare better than girls, who have lower attendance and higher drop-out rates, especially in rural areas.

9. Following the enumeration of the 1966 census, which indicated an accelerated population growth rate, and in response to increased costs of health and education programmes and to the difficulties of providing jobs for all of its citizens, the Government of Tunisia launched a national programme to strike a balance between population growth and economic and social development. Much of Tunisia's initial success in this undertaking was the result of the early institution of a national family planning programme, the exceptional economic growth of the country during the 1970s and increased educational and economic opportunities for women. Other achievements included the improvement of women's status through the promulgation of the Code for Personal Status in 1956, which accelerated the involvement of women in the economic process.

10. By the end of the 1970s, however, the family planning programme reached a plateau. This was due to, among other things: (a) the lack of effective information, education and communication (IEC) in support of family planning service delivery; (b) the failure adequately to identify and serve target groups; (c) the inadequacy of refresher training; and (d) the rapid turnover of staff. The stagnation of the programme coincided with economic and social problems facing the Government as a result of the drop in oil prices and the repatriation of migrants from Europe and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

11. Since that time, however, the National Office for the Family and Population (ONFP), which is responsible for carrying out Tunisia's family planning programme, has devised new strategies for its programmes, giving new impetus to its efforts. The degree to which it has succeeded is evidenced by the fact that Tunisia received the United Nations Population Award in 1987.

12. In spite of its status as a middle-income country, Tunisia requires inputs from other donor agencies, as it cannot fully assume the costs of a population programme at this time. This is due in part to the fact that the Government is currently engaged in an economic restructuring programme. To assure self-reliance in the long term, the Government will seek external resources for investment in the public sector as well as develop the private sector for delivery of family planning services.

III. REVIEW OF UNFPA AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO DATE

13. UNFPA's assistance to Tunisia began in 1974 by providing support for strengthening the structures of ONFP. This was done on a project-by-project basis until 1981. The first (1974-1978) and second

programmes (1978-1981) provided continuing support for MCH/FP activities and IEC, including new training programmes for medical and paramedical personnel. Following a basic needs assessment mission in 1980, the Governing Council approved $5 million for the third programme (1982-1985), which was later extended to 1986. Evaluation exercises in 1985-1986 called for a multisectoral approach to push the family planning programme beyond the plateau it had reached. This led to the development of the Fund's fourth country programme ($3.5 million for 1987-1991), which emphasized programme management and co-ordination, as well as research and evaluation in the health and education sectors. Further allocations in support of the MCH/FP programme and the provision of needed contraceptives brought the total programme budget to $5 million.

Maternal and child health and family planning

14. UNFPA is supporting the Government's strategy of targeting assistance to rural areas, devoting 60 per cent of the budget under the current programme to these areas. The Université Libre de Bruxelles is providing technical assistance. The activities undertaken have improved family health service delivery by upgrading and integrating MCH and family planning services in selected areas. This was achieved in spite of a high turn-over of regional officials and MCH/FP medical and paramedical staff. The success of these efforts encouraged ONFP to extend such integration to the rest of the country. However, two major weaknesses were encountered: the insufficient support given to the IEC component and that intended for strengthening management, monitoring and evaluation. Co-ordination among donors was also insufficient.

Information, education and communication

15. In the current programme, 15 per cent of assistance is dedicated to the revitalization and broadening of population education. A project aimed at the primary school system has helped to develop approaches and methodologies to integrate concepts of population into the curricula and training of teachers. The last phase, the actual teaching of population education, is starting now. UNFPA has also been supporting the integration of population education into the curricula of secondary schools since 1975, but this is not yet complete. UNFPA is assisting the Higher Institute for Education and Post-Graduate Training in developing a self-training method through the production of population training modules, the organization of regional conferences and the development of research activities.

Population policy formulation

16. UNFPA has provided only limited assistance to this sector, primarily in the form of technical assistance for strengthening the capacity of the Institute for Research and Studies in Population (IREP). The UNFPA project has helped provide data to develop population projections, methodologies and approaches for integrating population dynamics into development planning; initiate population policy research; and develop a management and information system. However, integration of these activities is not yet complete, nor is institution-building within IREP. UNFPA assistance has also helped strengthen the monitoring system on civil data, a project that would have benefited from added quality control in civil registration and vital statistics.

Women, population and development

17. UNFPA is supporting a project, in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for the training of trainers in women's centres. The project started in

late 1989, but the transfer of the Division for Women's Training and Education from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment slowed down project implementation during the first semester of 1990. The technical capacities of the trainees must be strengthened in order to achieve the project's objectives. At the end of 1989, UNFPA approved a project for the training of trainers of the General Directorate for Social Promotion. This is expected to have a multiplier effect on awareness creation. The overall objective of the Directorate, which has an audience of more than 1,000, is to upgrade the education level of young adults.

Other external assistance

18. A substantial part of population assistance in Tunisia is provided by UNFPA. Other organizations, the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank, have provided support almost exclusively to the health sector. WHO support, in the amount of $1.8 million for 1990-1991, focuses on providing basic maternal and child health services, strengthening the vaccination programme, training personnel in and improving data collection and data analysis, increasing awareness of AIDS and conducting biomedical research. UNICEF support of $1.5 million for 1987-1991 covers immunization and health education in primary schools. Two World Bank loans supported the construction and equipment of 33 hospital centres and 225 health centres as well as maintenance of 100 other centres and 6 health schools. UNESCO, besides executing UNFPA-funded projects, supports pilot vocational training for women. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has participated with WHO in a project of AIDS prevention.

19. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has contributed $45 million to family planning programmes, which has been used, inter alia, to construct 74 health centres, train medical and paramedical personnel, strengthen family planning services and provide vehicles and contraceptives. USAID has also developed a programme in the amount of $7.5 million over 5 years (1986-1990) to integrate family planning modules into basic education of health schools and to promote social marketing. The USAID current programme of assistance ends in December 1990. Further involvement will probably be limited to IEC and to the social marketing of contraceptives.

20. Other donors active in population activities include Canada, which contributes to UNICEF's vaccination programme; Germany, providing an $850,000 grant in support of the vocational training of rural girls; and Italy, with $6 million (1986-1988) for developing income-generating activities for women.

IV. PROPOSED PROGRAMME 1992-1996

21. The proposed UNFPA programme is based on an analysis of the country's population situation, lessons learned from previous programmes and the findings and recommendations of the PRSD mission, which were officially endorsed by the Government. It is designed to supplement and complement the national strategy for the eighth development plan which is based on: (a) integration of family planning into health services; (b) privatization of service-providers; and (c) decreasing the socio-economic differences between regions. The main objectives of the programme, which coincides with World Bank assistance to integrate MCH/FP into basic health care, with UNDP's fifth programming cycle and with UNICEF's programme for the improvement of children's and mother's health over the same period, are detailed in paragraph 3 above. The overall goal of the programme is to help the Government of Tunisia attain self-reliance in the areas where it is still dependent on outside assistance.

Maternal and child health and family planning

22. UNFPA would support the Government in achieving its objectives of reducing population growth from 2.15 per cent in 1988 to 1.8 per cent in 2001 and halving the current infant mortality rate of 50 per 1,000. Activities in this sector would seek to ensure a better quality MCH/FP service delivery system nation-wide in order to increase the contraceptive usage rate from 49.8 per cent in 1988 to 64.5 per cent in 2001 and double the number of users in that same period. These objectives would be achieved through: (a) restructuring, expanding and improving maternal health services so that within 10 years all primary health care centres would offer family planning and prenatal care; (b) reorienting ONFP progressively towards a normative and co-ordinating role by strengthening its medium- and long-term planning capacity as well as its training and research capability; and (c) developing a management information system.

23. UNFPA would assist in expanding family planning services and developing maternal health services particularly in central and southern Tunisia, where health-care coverage is low and the infrastructure insufficient. This assistance would aim at developing and enhancing an integrated approach to MCH/FP service delivery within the existing primary health care centres. UNFPA would also support the preparation of a maternal health programme by: (a) developing research on maternal mortality and its causes; (b) improving delivery of MCH/FP services by upgrading the capabilities of the personnel of the fixed basic health centres and by strengthening the mobile teams in the rural regions where health centres are insufficient. This would enable Tunisia to achieve the short-term objective of increasing prenatal visits from 58 per cent in 1989 to 67 per cent in 1995 and assisted deliveries from 62.2 per cent in 1989 to 75 per cent in 1995. Necessary basic equipment for maternal health care would be provided to basic health care centres and district hospitals in the central and southern regions.

24. UNFPA would support the introduction and purchase of reversible and effective contraceptive methods for the programme. Based on available estimates, it is expected that the needs for contraceptives during the programme cycle would be between $6.5 million and $10 million. In this respect, UNFPA would assist the Government in ensuring the provision of one third to one half of the necessary commodities, namely implants, oral contraceptives and injectables. In the private sector, UNFPA would support a study in urban/suburban areas to assess users' possible contribution to the cost of contraceptives. This would help define the role of the private sector in the expansion of service delivery.

25. UNFPA would help to upgrade basic skills in family planning and maternal health within the health schools and provide on-the-job training for workers at the health centres and rural meeting centres, especially in techniques of counselling and interpersonal communication. Training in research, monitoring and evaluation and management would be carried out as well.

26. UNFPA would provide a total amount of $6 million for the MCH/FP sector, of which $3.5 million would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources to cover the purchase of contraceptives needed over the programme period.

Information, education and communication

27. UNFPA would support the Government in developing and implementing new communication approaches and further institutionalizing population education in the formal sector as well as developing projects in the non-formal sector. The new programme is designed to supplement the government strategy,

which through a reform of the educational system, attempts to address the major problems facing the Ministry of National Education. These include: (a) the high drop-out rate and difficulty of access to primary school that mainly affects girls; (b) an unacceptable rate of repeats (approaching 25 per cent), caused by the quality of instruction and by parents' lack of support for school education; and (c) the low rate of advancement to secondary education, also linked to the quality of the curricula, lack of family support, involvement of adolescents in the labour force and difficulty of access to schools in rural areas.

28. UNFPA would assist the Government in developing population education in the formal sector by adopting new methodologies and techniques. The programmes already initiated would be continued and extended, the training and refresher training of teachers would be developed further and environmental issues would be introduced. Special emphasis would be placed on the institutionalization of population education in the secondary cycle.

29. Population components would be specially designed for out-of-school education programmes, particularly those in the occupational health and agriculture sectors. The programme would make use of existing programmes outside the national education system, notably those under the Ministry of Social Affairs and training centres for girls and vocational training for young men under the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment.

30. In the area of information, UNFPA would assist the Government in developing and disseminating radio-television programmes on family planning. In the area of communication, UNFPA would support integration of family planning in occupational health programmes, in large and small enterprises, in the army, and through the Extension Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture. UNFPA inputs would be directed towards: (a) identification of target groups for the preparation of appropriate messages; and (b) expansion of training programmes to managers, trainers and community workers in order to achieve a multiplier effect at a reasonable cost. ONFP, in close co-operation with concerned sectoral departments and organizations, would be the agency responsible for these endeavours.

31. UNFPA would provide a total amount of $1.5 million for this sector, of which $700,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Data collection and analysis

32. In the area of data collection and analysis, UNFPA would be involved in upgrading the technical capacity of Regional Development Centres to compile, process, disseminate and utilize population and family planning data. This would further bolster efforts for decentralization and would enhance co-ordination and co-operation between the different producers of data. UNFPA would provide technical assistance to ONFP at the central and regional levels for the compilation of high-quality data on the family planning programme, including family planning statistics and fertility surveys as well as for the analysis and use of this information. UNFPA would also provide assistance to the National Institute for Statistics in the field of civil data, to assess the coverage of registration and to conduct population surveys and related analyses. UNFPA assistance would include in-country and out-of-country training as well as equipment.

33. UNFPA would provide a total amount of $450,000 for this sector, of which $150,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Population policy formulation

34. In the field of population policy formulation, UNFPA would support the Directorate for Human Resources of the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development, which is the focal point in formulation and implementation of population policies. It would work to develop the Directorate's capacities for planning to enable it to perform adequately as the technical secretariat for the Supreme Population Council. UNFPA would also help to develop the capacities of the Institute for Research and Studies in Population, which was created with UNFPA support and whose existence indicates a strong advance in developing a policy research tool for the advisers of the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development. It would seek to strengthen the regional structures of the Ministry and to assist it in setting up a data bank and a management information system. UNFPA would provide a total amount of $700,000 for this sector, of which $200,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Women, population and development

35. While women are increasingly making their presence felt in government administration, and particularly in education and in the justice system, the fact remains that unskilled or poorly qualified working women are afflicted by an unemployment rate that is higher than that of men (20.9 per cent versus 13.9 per cent in 1989). To achieve the objectives set forth by the Government, the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development has an overall strategy that focuses on research, schooling, including university and extra-curricular education, information and communication, and social welfare.

36. The new programme would support the introduction of population concepts, including family planning, hygiene, nutrition, and environmental protection, into the vocational training of rural women and girls. UNFPA would also support activities to promote the integration of women, particularly in rural areas, into the development process through the creation of income-generating activities.

37. Support would be provided for the establishment of the National Research, Documentation, and Information Centre on Women under the Ministry of Social Affairs. The objective of the Centre would be to collect, analyse and publish data on women and to provide the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development and other concerned institutions with the tools required to prepare and develop measures aimed at improving women's status. The Centre will develop a network to support women-in-development activities and will co-ordinate such activities with governmental organizations as well as with national, regional and international non-governmental organizations.

38. Research studies would be conducted on the reasons for the high drop-out rate of girls from schools, on the reasons for low use of services by rural women, as well as on the effects of legislation on the role and status of women. The Ministry of Education, ONFP and relevant Tunisian universities and institutions would be responsible for these activities.

39. UNFPA would provide a total amount of $1,150,000 for this sector, of which $450,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Programme reserve

40. UNFPA would set aside a reserve of $200,000 to meet unforeseen needs that may arise during the period of the programme.

Programme co-ordination

41. Co-ordination of external assistance is under the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development. In the last few years, Tunisia has put major emphasis on promoting co-operation with donor countries and institutions. UNFPA is expected to play the leading role in co-ordinating and promoting population assistance with such other donors as the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF. The fifth UNFPA programme of assistance would coincide with the eighth national development plan and with the fifth programming cycle of UNDP. The present programme has been discussed with the World Bank, and the activities planned under UNFPA's programme and those planned under the forthcoming World Bank project 1991-1995 have been co-ordinated.

Programme monitoring, evaluation and management

42. Projects developed in the sectors described above would all have built-in monitoring and evaluation components. Major projects would undergo independent evaluation. The UNFPA Representative, who is also the UNDP Resident Representative, has the responsibility for managing the programme, assisted by a National Programme Officer, a programme assistant, a financial staff member and a secretary.

43. Standard UNFPA procedures would be followed for the implementation of the projects that would constitute this programme. A mid-term review would be conducted in 1993-1994, if deemed necessary.

Financial summary

44. As indicated in paragraph 1, UNFPA would provide assistance in the amount of $10 million for the period 1992-1996 of which $5 million would be committed from UNFPA's regular resources. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $5 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not possible, UNFPA would seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources. The breakdown by sector is as follows:

	UNFPA regular resources $	Other resources $	Total $
Maternal and child health and family planning	2,500,000	3,500,000	6,000,000
Information, education and communication	800,000	700,000	1,500,000
Data collection and analysis	300,000	150,000	450,000
Population policy formulation	500,000	200,000	700,000
Women, population and development	700,000	450,000	1,150,000
Programme reserve	200,000	--	200,000
Total	5,000,000	5,000,000	10,000,000

V. RECOMMENDATION

45. The Executive Director recommends that the Governing Council:

(a) Approve the programme for Tunisia in the amount of $10 million for the five-year period 1992-1996;

(b) Authorize the Executive Director to commit an amount of $5 million from UNFPA's regular resources;

(c) Further authorize the Executive Director to provide the balance of up to $5 million from UNFPA's regular resources, if such resources are available. If and to the extent they are not, further authorize the Executive Director to seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources; and

(d) Authorize the Executive Director to allocate the funds and to make appropriate arrangements with the Government of Tunisia and with the executing agencies.